

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A computer-implemented method for securing intellectual property rights, the method comprising:
 - providing a smart electronic invention disclosure form to be filled out; and
 - receiving a filled-out invention disclosure in electronic form.
2. The method of claim 1 further comprising:
 - active prompting of an inventor by the smart disclosure form to provide best modes known to the inventor for practicing an invention.
3. The method of claim 2 further comprising:
 - active prompting of an inventor by the smart disclosure form to provide detailed information required to enable one of ordinary skill to practice the invention.
4. The method of claim 3 further comprising:
 - active prompting of an inventor by the smart disclosure form to identify co-inventors, if any, of the invention,
 - wherein the smart disclosure form prompts an inventor to input information in pre-selected fields.
5. The method of claim 4 further comprising:
 - receiving as input a single click of a button to cause the filled-out invention disclosure form to be converted in an automated way to a patent application,
 - wherein information in pre-selected fields of the invention disclosure form is selectively placed in a pre-selected location in said patent application.
6. The method of claim 5 wherein the single click also causes the patent application to be filed at a patent office.
7. The method of claim 6 wherein the patent application is filed at the patent office electronically.
8. The method of claim 7 further comprising:
 - executing the patent application with a digital signature of an inventor, assignee, or registered patent practitioner before the patent application is filed.

1 9. The method of claim 7 further comprising:
2 encrypting the patent application with a private key of the inventor, assignee, or
3 registered patent practitioner before the provisional patent application is filed.

1 10. The method of claim 9 further comprising:
2 maintaining a registry of public keys at the patent office; and
3 decrypting the patent application with a public key for the inventor, assignee, or
4 registered patent practitioner.

1 11. The method of claim 7 further comprising:
2 transmitting notification that the patent application was filed to an intellectual
3 property (IP) server.

1 12. The method of claim 11 further comprising:
2 automatic calendaring by the IP server of a deadline date for foreign filing
3 under an international convention.

1 13. The method of claim 12 further comprising:
2 transmitting a reminder communication from the IP server to a specified address
3 at a specified time period before the deadline date.

1 14. The method of claim 12 wherein the patent application comprises a
2 provisional patent application and further comprising:
3 automatic calendaring by the IP server of a deadline date for converting the
4 provisional patent application to a non-provisional patent application.

1 15. The method of claim 4 further comprising:
2 providing drawing tool icons to facilitate creation of figures to be included in
3 the filled-out invention disclosure.

1 16. The method of claim 15 further comprising:
2 active prompting of the inventor by the smart disclosure form to create figures
3 depicting novel aspects of the invention.

1 17. The method of claim 4 further comprising:

receiving as input a single click on a scan button to cause a drawing to be scanned and included as a figure in the filled-out invention disclosure form.

18. A computer-implemented method of processing first invention disclosure data comprising:
prompting a user on a client system for first invention disclosure data;
receiving the first invention disclosure data from the client system on a server system, wherein the first invention disclosure data comprises a plurality of invention data elements;
storing the first invention disclosure data on the server system; and
processing each of the plurality of invention data elements using a corresponding plurality of invention analysis tools to produce a plurality of invention analysis results.

19. The method of claim 18 wherein the plurality of invention data elements include invention specification data elements.

20. The method of claim 19 wherein one of the invention analysis tools is an application generation tool, the method further comprising:
extracting the invention specification data elements from the invention disclosure data;
processing the invention specification data elements using the application generation tool; and
automatically generating a patent application.

21. The method of claim 19 wherein one of the invention analysis tools is an publication generation tool, the method further comprising:
extracting the invention specification data elements from the invention disclosure data;
processing the invention specification data elements using the publication generation tool; and
automatically generating a publication document.

22. The method of claim 18 wherein the plurality of invention data elements include licensing data elements.

23. The method of claim 22 wherein one of the invention analysis tools is an licensing analysis tool, the method further comprising:
extracting the licensing data elements from the invention disclosure data;
processing the licensing data elements using the licensing analysis tool; and
automatically generating licensing data results.

24. The method of claim 18 wherein the plurality of invention data elements include information disclosure data elements.

25. The method of claim 24 wherein one of the invention analysis tools is an information disclosure tool, the method further comprising:
extracting the information disclosure data elements from the invention disclosure data;
processing the information disclosure data elements using the information disclosure tool; and
automatically generating information disclosure results.

26. The method of claim 18 wherein the plurality of invention data elements include case management data elements.

27. The method of claim 26 wherein one of the invention analysis tools is an case management tool, the method further comprising:
extracting the case management data elements from the invention disclosure data;
processing the case management data elements using the case management tool;
and
automatically generating case management results.

28. The method of claim 18 wherein the plurality of invention data elements include docketing data elements.

29. The method of claim 28 wherein one of the invention analysis tools is a docketing tool, the method further comprising:
extracting the docketing data elements from the invention disclosure data;
processing the docketing data elements using the docketing tool; and

5 automatically generating docketing results.

1 30. The method of claim 18 further comprising:

2 prompting a second user on a second client system for second invention
3 disclosure data;

4 receiving the second invention disclosure data from the second client system on
5 the server system, wherein the second invention disclosure data comprises a plurality of
6 invention data elements;

7 storing the second invention disclosure data on the server system; and
8 processing each of the plurality of invention data elements from the first and
9 second invention disclosure data using corresponding invention analysis tools to
10 produce the plurality invention analysis results.

1 31. The method of claim 18 further comprising:

2 prompting the user for second invention disclosure data;

3 receiving the second invention disclosure data on the server system, wherein the
4 second invention disclosure data comprises a plurality of invention data elements;

5 storing the second invention disclosure data with the first invention disclosure
6 data in a disclosure history table on the server system; and

7 processing each of the plurality of invention data elements from the first and
8 second invention disclosure data using corresponding invention analysis tools to
9 produce the plurality invention analysis results,

10 wherein only non-overlapping information from the second invention disclosure
11 data is processed by the analysis tools.

1 32. A server system comprising a processor and a computer-readable
2 memory coupled to said processor, said computer-readable memory including computer
3 instructions that:

4 (i) generate web pages to guide a client system through a process to
5 create invention disclosure data;

6 (ii) store the invention disclosure data in a database; and

7 (iii) upon receipt of a command from a client system, automatically
8 generate a provisional patent application from said invention disclosure data.

- 1 33. The server system of claim 32 wherein said computer instructions
2 further electronically file the provisional patent application automatically in a patent
3 office.
- 1 34. The server system of claim 32 wherein said computer instructions
2 generate the provisional patent application when the command has a first value, and the
3 computer instructions generate a non-provisional application when the command has a
4 second value.
- 1 35. The server system of claim 32 wherein said computer instructions
2 further docket a filing date.
- 1 36. The server system of claim 32 wherein said computer instructions
2 further docket a bar date indicating the date by which a non-provisional must be filed.
- 1 37. The server system of claim 32 wherein said computer instructions
2 further docket a foreign filing date deadline.